Women’s Economic Empowerment
2012–2013
Women’s Economic Empowerment

In many parts of the world, opening a bottle of Coca-Cola means opening the doors to economic empowerment for women. In the Philippines, women own or operate more than 86 percent of the small neighborhood stores that sell our products. In Africa, thousands of women own and operate our Micro Distribution Centers (MDCs). And in developing countries, half of all farmers are women. All in all, women make up a significantly high percentage of key segments of our value chain. As we move toward our vision of doubling our business by 2020, women will be essential contributors to our success.

Women are not only pillars of our business but also pillars of their communities. Women invest a sizable portion of the money they earn in the health and education of their children and in their local economies, creating a tremendous economic ripple. Unleashing the entrepreneurial potential of women is one of the surest ways to make our business sustainable, and one of the most effective and lasting ways we can help families and communities prosper. When we invest in the success of women, we invest in our own success and in the success of communities around the world.

Empowering 5 million women entrepreneurs by 2020

**Goal:** Enable the economic empowerment of 5 million women entrepreneurs across our value chain by 2020.

**Progress:** In progress. As of December 31, 2012, 5by20 programs had enabled approximately 300,000 women.

Given the crucial role of women in our system—and the economic barriers too many women still face—we have made women’s economic empowerment a priority. Our 5by20 women’s initiative launched in 2010 and continues to grow and gain momentum. The 5by20 initiative aims to enable the economic empowerment of 5 million women entrepreneurs in our global value chain by 2020. In collaboration with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), governments and businesses, we’re helping female entrepreneurs associated with our business gain access to three essential economic enablers: business skills training, loans and financial services and assets, and peer networks and mentoring. The 5by20 initiative focuses on women in six segments of our value chain: producers, suppliers, distributors, retailers, recyclers and artisans.

In 2012, we expanded and deepened the 5by20 initiative. By year’s end, 5by20 programs were operating in Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, Haiti, India, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Africa and Thailand. New 5by20 programs were under development in 10 additional countries as well. Most of the women we have enabled thus far are retailers. Three quarters of the women enabled are new to our value chain. In all, the 5by20 initiative has enabled approximately 300,000 women since the launch of the program in 2010 through December 31, 2012.

Connecting in new markets

We extended 5by20 programs to a number of new markets in 2012 and 2013. Following is a brief look at three of these new markets:

**China.** In January 2013, we joined China Women’s Development Foundation in announcing the launch of our first 5by20 program in the world’s most populous nation. The 5by20 initiative will help provide business skills training...
for women retailers and other women across our value chain. The program will initially launch in six provinces and will eventually expand throughout the country, helping an estimated 500,000 women start businesses by 2020. Women who complete the program will be eligible to apply for business start-up loans.

**Nigeria.** The 5by20 initiative has already provided small-scale women retailers in Nigeria with business skills training and retail assets. In partnership with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), our bottler in Nigeria is working with Access Bank to provide financing to women micro-distributors across the country.

**Mexico.** Potencia Mexico, one of our primary 5by20 programs in Mexico, builds on the successful Coletivo program in Brazil, in which local NGOs teach retailing skills to young adults in low-income areas and help them enter the job market. 5by20 programs have enabled nearly 800 women in Mexico as of December 31, 2012.

**Collaborating for change**

Partnerships are essential to our 5by20 initiative’s success. We collaborate with governments, nonprofits, civil society and other businesses to leverage our combined strengths, encourage innovation and scale up the most effective programs more quickly. Our recent key partnerships include:

**IFC.** In March 2013, we announced a $100 million, three-year joint initiative with the IFC, to provide financing and business skills training to small and medium sized businesses that are owned or operated by women entrepreneurs across our value chain. Work under the initiative has already begun on a program in Nigeria intended to finance female micro-distributors.

**UN Women.** In September 2011, we embarked on a major global partnership with UN Women that will reach more than 40,000 women in South Africa, Egypt and Brazil by the end of 2015. We expect that the women we enable through the partnership will expand their ability to establish and grow their businesses, increase their earnings and create new jobs in their communities.

*Dr. Jill Biden visits Coca-Cola 5by20 entrepreneurs in Rio de Janeiro.*
Lessons learned
In September 2013, The Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, together with Business Fights Poverty, released a study on the 5by20 initiative as part of its series of reports on the roles companies can play in expanding economic opportunity. In addition to providing a detailed analysis of several 5by20 programs and the initiative’s successes and challenges to date, the study identified three lessons from the 5by20 initiative applicable to other companies seeking to make their value chains more inclusive:

• There must be a business case for the company, and the business case is often multidimensional.
• To have a sustainable model with the most potential for scale, initiatives should develop locally and, as noted in the report, be “in line with local business priorities, capabilities and resources.”
• It is important to be nuanced about the idea of partnership. “There are many different kinds of partners and partnerships, and all can be fit-for-purpose,” note the study’s authors, “depending on how that purpose aligns with the incentives and institutional capacities of the partners involved.”

Looking ahead: challenges and opportunities
We expect the 5by20 initiative to continue to grow in 2014 and beyond. As the initiative gains momentum, we’re learning that it takes time to develop scalable, sustainable empowerment programs that are deeply relevant to local women and their communities. So we are taking great care in collaborating with our partners to develop programs. We continue to test programs and to explore how to best localize, optimize and scale the most successful of them. We believe this customized approach is the best way to ensure lasting empowerment among the women we are engaging.

Training and support for small-scale mango farmers
To help improve the livelihoods of small-scale fruit farmers—many of whom are women—we launched Project Unnati, an initiative that encourages farmers to adopt drip irrigation and a method of farming called ultra-high-density plantation practice, which allows mango orchards to reach their full fruit-bearing potential in three to four years rather than the seven to nine years needed by conventional farming. The practice also makes it possible for farmers to plant as many as 600 trees per acre, dramatically increasing yields. Conventional farming methods allow for about 40 trees per acre. Project Unnati has the potential to double mango yields and improve the livelihoods of more than 50,000 farmers.

Growing sales and small businesses with MDCs
Our MDC program has contributed to the growth of our business and the growth of local economies in Africa and Asia for more than a decade. It helped inspire and inform the 5by20 initiative and is one of the key ways we are economically empowering entrepreneurs worldwide. MDCs are product distribution centers managed by local people in developing countries. The centers help us do business in hard-to-reach communities; in exchange, our local bottlers offer ongoing coaching and mentoring to MDC owners. MDCs contribute substantially to our efforts to economically empower women. In Africa, where 3,400 MDCs employ more than 19,000 people, more than 800 MDCs are owned and managed by women. Since 2009, more than half of new MDCs have been owned and operated by women; in Nigeria and Ghana, women own more than 70 percent of all MDCs.

Our bottlers’ use of micro distribution continues to grow. In countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and Mozambique, MDCs account for the majority of sales. In China, our
Market Execution Partners model, which operates on principles similar to those of MDCs, has grown significantly over the last three years. We see opportunities to expand the MDC model to other developing countries in Asia and Africa.

A leading NGO recognizes our women’s programs

In March 2013, we were honored to receive the 2013 Catalyst Award in recognition of our work to advance and empower women, both in our workplace and across our value chain. Catalyst is the leading nonprofit organization with a mission to expand opportunities for women and business. Catalyst recognized both the 5by20 initiative and our Global Women’s Initiative (GWI), a program led by our Chairman and CEO, Muhtar Kent. GWI was created in 2007 to advance women to leadership positions within the Company and to empower women in business throughout our external value chain. Read more about the Catalyst Award and learn more about how we are empowering women in our Company.

Building a life and a business in Rio

Regina Maria Silva Gomes lives near Morro dos Macacos, one of the sprawling hillside favelas, or shantytowns, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In a densely populated community where 90 percent of adults have not completed high school and 57 percent of households are single-parent homes, Regina’s life hasn’t been easy. Several years ago, when the death of her husband was tragically followed by the deaths of her two sons, she was left to raise her five young grandchildren on her own. It would have been easy to give up hope, but Regina’s resilience and perseverance opened doors where circumstances had closed them.

Regina’s dear friend and mentor, Donna Anna, a local community leader, recognized Regina’s potential and asked her to lead a project to clean up their community. The streets were littered with trash and infested with rodents. It was a dirty job, but a job nonetheless. For Regina, it was an opportunity to support her grandchildren. It also provided a way for her to serve her community and, in her words, gave her “a reason to live.”

That was four years ago. Today Regina’s life has changed—and so has the community around her. Her job collecting recyclables led her to two programs that are part of

**Regina’s Story**

Meet Regina Maria Silva Gomes: single caretaker of 5 grandchildren from the favelas of Rio de Janeiro.

The situation in Rio’s favelas

- 90% of adults have not finished high school
- 57% of households are single-parent

Regina needs employment to support her family. With no practical business skills, she alone resorts to picking up litter in her community and recycling it for income. She also begins to transform some trash into sell-able crafts.

Regina receives training to improve her business knowledge and design skills through a Coca-Cola 5by20 program called “Coletivo.”

Success! Regina recently purchased her first home, just outside the favela. She can feed her family and provide an education for her grandkids. Also 700 families in the community are supported by her business.

New Regina can grow her business, tripling her income and employing 10 other people in the community.

Regina feels great about herself, is a mentor to others and is a respected leader in the community.
The Coca-Cola Company’s 5by20 initiative: Coletivo Recycling, which helps formalize and streamline recycling cooperatives, and Coletivo Artisans, which offers design training and sales channels to artisan groups.

Through these programs, Regina received business skills training and coaching that allowed her to make her business more efficient. With the help of the 5by20 initiative, she developed a computer program to track the credit at the local grocery store that residents earn from the bottles they bring to her recycling center. The program also makes it easier to stay organized and track the revenue she generates. Her business has united the community in a collectively beneficial cause: keeping their neighborhood clean and protecting the environment.

With her recycling business up and running, Regina started a second business by bringing together a team of local women artisans who turn the empty plastic bottles they collect into beautiful handcrafted works of art. She sells these in a small shop next to the recycling center and through a catalog. Today, with the skills she learned through the 5by20 initiative Coletivo, both her businesses are growing, and Regina is making her community stronger and healthier.

A few months ago, Regina proudly purchased her first home—located just outside the favela where she spent most of her life. “I leave [the favela] at night to go home,” Regina says, “but I come back here every day to work because this is where my soul lives.”